

communities long targeted by displacement, denial of sovereignty, slavery, and other injustices. These persecuted but resilient communities continue to suffer through generations of disproportionately higher rates of unemployment, poverty, criminalization, and homelessness. Facets of the 1 percent campaign to blame these groups for these problems while obstructing healing and restoration.

Those with power have divided us from working in solidarity by perpetuating historical prejudices and discrimination based on perceived race, religion, immigrant or indigenous status, income, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability, among other things. These divisions have inhibited our ability to work in solidarity, though today we recognize the power of uniting as the 99 percent.

Financial institutions gambled with our savings, homes, and economy. They collapsed the financial system and needed the public to bail them out of their failures yet deny any responsibility and continue to fight oversight. Corporations loot from those whose labor creates society's prosperity, while the government allows them to privatize profits and socialize risk.

Corporate interests threaten life on Earth by extracting and burning fossil fuels and resisting the necessary transition to renewable energy. Their drilling, mining, clear-cutting, overfishing, and factory farming destroys the land, jeopardizes our food and water, and poisons the soil with near impunity. They privilege polluters over people by subsidizing fossil fuels, blocking investments in clean energy and efficient transportation, and hiding environmental destruction from public oversight.

Private corporations, with the government's support, use common resources and infrastructure for short-term personal profit, while stifling efforts to invest in public goods.

The U.S. government engages in drawn-out, costly conflicts abroad. Numerous acts of conquest have been, and continue to be, pursued to control resources, overthrow foreign governments, and install subservient regimes. These wars destroy the lives of innocent civilians and American soldiers, many of whom suffer adverse effects throughout life. These operations are a blank check to divert money from domestic priorities.

Government authorities cultivate a culture of fear to invade our privacy, limit assembly, restrict speech, and deny due process. They have failed in their duty to protect our rights. Exacerbated by profiteering interests, the criminal justice system has unfairly targeted underprivileged communities and outspoken groups for prosecution rather than protection.

Corporatized culture warps our perception of reality. It cheapens and mocks the beauty of human thought and experience while promoting excessive materialism as the path to happiness. The corporate news media furthers the interests of the very wealthy, distorts and disregards the truth, and confines our imagination of what is possible for ourselves and society.

Leaders are trading our access to basic needs in exchange for handouts to the ultra-wealthy. Our rights to healthcare, education, food, water, and housing are sacrificed to profit-driven market forces. They are attacking unemployment insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security, creating an uncertain future for us all.\*

A better world is possible.

To all people,

We, the Washington D.C. General Assembly occupying K Street in McPherson Square, urge you to assert your power.

Exercise your right to peaceably assemble and reclaim the commons. Re-conceive ways to build a democratic, just, and sustainable world.

To all who value democracy, we encourage you to collaborate and share available resources.

Join your voice with ours and let it amplify until the heart of the movement booms with our chorus of solidarity.

\*These grievances are not all inclusive.

## OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 16, 2011*

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 26, 1995, when the last attempt at a balanced budget amendment passed the House by a bipartisan vote of 300–132, the national debt was \$4,801,405,175,294.28.

Today, it is \$15,098,098,486,788.82. We've added \$10,296,693,311,494.54 dollars to our debt in 16 years. This is \$10 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

## HONORING THE LIFE OF MR. CLYDE MCINTOSH OF NORTH CAROLINA

**HON. HEATH SHULER**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 16, 2011*

Mr. SHULER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of an outstanding public servant and dedicated volunteer in Yancey County, North Carolina. Mr. Clyde McIntosh of Burnsville committed his life to service and activism. After graduating from Burnsville High School in 1950, Mr. McIntosh proudly served four years in the United States Navy. Upon completion of his service, he moved back to the mountains of Western North Carolina where he built a successful real estate and development business and operated a dairy farm. During this period, he worked diligently toward the goal of preserving the rural heritage of the area.

Mr. McIntosh assumed public office when he was elected Sheriff of Yancey County in 1986. From 1999 to 2005, he served on the Board of Directors of the Yancey County Department of Social Services, spending a portion of his tenure as Chair. For many years, Mr. McIntosh was an active community volunteer for the Lions Club and Meals on Wheels.

Mr. McIntosh worked for years to educate Yancey County youth on the importance of civic engagement and community involvement. He acted as a mentor for the Young Democrats organization of Yancey County, encouraging young people to be politically active.

I commend his outstanding contributions to the Democratic Party. In April 2001, he was named Mountain Democrat of the Year and also served as the Yancey County Democratic

Party Chair. He served as Precinct Chair for both Jacks Creek and Burnsville Townships.

Our mountain community is a better place because of Mr. McIntosh's devotion to activism and service. Mr. McIntosh was an invaluable presence in the lives of the many people he inspired and helped through his work. Though he will be missed, I know this legacy will live on for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the exemplary life of Mr. Clyde McIntosh of Yancey County, North Carolina.

## WE MUST GET OUR FISCAL HOUSE IN ORDER

**HON. SCOTT DESJARLAIS**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 16, 2011*

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, I have made it clear from the beginning that until the Senate leadership can pass a budget, the House should be using the baseline off of the framework included in the House-passed 2012 budget. The Path to Prosperity is a credible and commonsense proposal that would put our nation on the path to balanced budgets and debt reduction.

Unfortunately, the spending levels set forth in today's omnibus appropriations package exceed those numbers established in the Path to Prosperity. For this reason, I had to cast my vote against the legislation considered in the House today.

It is impossible to get our nation's fiscal house in order unless we have a budget framework to work off of. House Republicans have done their job and passed a budget, it is now time for Senate Democrats to do the same.

My constituents sent me to Washington to make the difficult spending decisions, and I'm more than willing to make them. Continuing Resolutions and omnibus packages are not the sort of bold action that the people in Tennessee's Fourth Congressional District expect. I applaud efforts by the House Leadership in which a number of our appropriations bills were considered this year under regular order and under open rules which allowed for debate and amendments. Unfortunately, this process was unable to be completed and many of the bills passed by the House have simply languished in the Senate without consideration.

I am hopeful that United States Congress will restart a process in which budgets are passed and the 12 appropriations bills are considered in an open process. Omnibus bills are unpopular to our constituents. They invite poor legislating and lead to increased spending. Our constituents expect and deserve more.

I have made a commitment to continue the fight for long-term solutions to rein in Washington's out-of-control spending, and I am appreciative of the constituents in the Fourth District of Tennessee who have sent me to Washington to do that very thing.